

EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL AT HOME

SUFFERING

EXPLORING NEXT SUNDAY'S THEME

Reflecting on the Gospel

The suffering Messiah (Matthew 16: 21-28)

This passage follows on directly from Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi that Jesus is the Messiah. This confession at Caesarea Philippi is central in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke for two reasons. First, it is the turning point when the disciples first fully recognise that Jesus is the Messiah. Second, it opens the way for Jesus to give explicit teaching about the kind of Messiah he really is. He is the Messiah who suffers alongside and on behalf of the people of God. Just as Peter found the idea of a suffering Messiah difficult to grasp, so have many future generations.

Our image to stimulate reflection on this passage is *suffering*.

Extracts from the Gospel passage (Matthew 16: 21-23)

From that time on,
Jesus began to show his disciples
that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering
at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes,
and be killed,
and on the third day be raised.
And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying,
'God forbid it, Lord!
This must never happen to you.'
But he turned and said to Peter,
'Get behind me, Satan!
You are a stumbling-block to me.'

Gospel prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
you suffered for our sake.
Heal us by your suffering and death,
that we may share with you your risen life;
for you are our God.
Amen.

ENGAGING WITH THE THEME AT HOME

Reflecting and meditating

Reflect on Jesus' teaching about suffering and Peter's reaction in Matthew 16: 21-28:

- what details in the passage catch your attention?
- what big ideas does the passage spark in your mind?
- what most touches your heart in the passage?
- what most stretches your mind and makes you think in the passage?

Thinking and talking

- why does Jesus teach about his forthcoming suffering as soon as he has been recognised as the Messiah?
- how do you understand Peter's rebuke to Jesus?
- what do you make of Jesus calling Peter a stumbling block?
- what do you make of Jesus' invitation to pick up the cross and follow him?
- what does this passage say for us today?

Using your Bible

Jesus' teaching about his forthcoming suffering follows immediately after Peter's confession that Jesus is the Messiah. See how Matthew uses the material he finds in Mark. See how Luke also uses that material:

- Mark 8: 31-9: 1
- Luke 9: 22-27

Explore passages in the Old Testament that have been interpreted as pointing to Jesus' suffering:

- Psalm 22: 6-18
- Isaiah 53: 3-12

Exploring online

- explore interpretations of the suffering Messiah
- explore images of the suffering Messiah in art
- explore poems about suffering

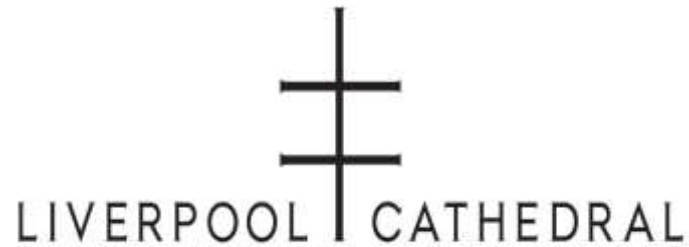
Drawing on experience

- reflect on your personal experience of suffering
- reflect on the suffering you have witnessed in others
- reflect on the suffering you see in the media

PROPER 17 (YEAR A) SUNDAY 30 AUGUST 2020

Creating and making

- create a collage that reflects suffering in the world
- create an anthology of passages reflecting suffering from the Bible and from literature
- collect images of the suffering Messiah
- create a reflection, poem, or prayer on the theme of suffering



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Each week we are inviting people in their homes to look forward to those Sunday services that follow the Revised Common Lectionary Gospel readings. We employ the SIFT approach (Sensing, Intuition, Feeling, and Thinking) to encourage reflection on the Sunday Gospel. We are suggesting a variety of ways in which people of all ages, and households working together, may engage with the Gospel reading and celebrate that engagement with shared activities.

Our invitation then is for you to share your reflections, prayers and photos of your creative work with the Cathedral by emailing them to Nelson.Pike@liverpoolcathedral.org.uk

These materials have been developed by the Canon Theologian of Liverpool Cathedral working in collaboration with the staff team here at the Cathedral, and with sponsorship and support from the St Mary's Centre in Wales and the St Christopher's College Trust.



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